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FBI spy real prize for Soviets

Double agent fooled bureau for 15 years, helped plant 'moles'

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WASHINGTON.—A prized FBI spy was unmasked last year as a Soviet double-agent who fed misinformation to U.S. intelligence agencies for 15 years and provided cover for "moles" who posed as Soviet defectors.

According to FBI sources, the bureau itself conducted the investigation that revealed the truth about the spy, a Russian national still known to them only by his code name, Fedora.

Fedora was recruited by the FBI to spy on his Soviet comrades in 1962 and was regarded by the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover as an expert on Soviet spying.

Some details of a top secret FBI report on Fedora are contained in an article that will appear in the October issue of Readers Digest. Sources in the FBI's foreign operations division confirmed the accuracy of the article to the Evening Journal Tuesday.

Fedora, who worked at the United Nations and reported to the FBI office in New York, returned to Moscow in 1977 and received the Soviet Union's highest award, the Order of Lenin, the Evening Journal learned. The FBI thought Fedora was spying for the agency in the Soviet Union and didn't learn of his duplicity until last year.

The FBI declined formal comment on Fedora or on the discovery that he was a double agent.

But, according to the bureau's secret report, Fedora was used to corroborate phony stories of KGB agents posing as defectors and to help the Soviet agents implant themselves in the U.S. intelligence community.

In one instance, inaccurate information supplied by Fedora may have led

FBI sources said Fedora fed the FBI a report that the Soviet Embassy had its own copy of the Pentagon Papers several months before Dr. Daniel Ellsberg gave the papers to The New York Times in 1971.

Fedora told his FBI control agent that employees of the Rand Corp., including Ellsberg, who had access to the Pentagon Papers, also had access to a highly sensitive document called the Standard Integration Operation Plan. That document described the entire command and control apparatus of the Defense Department on a day-to-day basis.

Hoover personally passed on this information to President Nixon in early 1971, FBI sources said.

The information led to a White House decision to form a special unit of intelligence agents to conduct burglaries in an effort to discover how the documents were leaked to the Russians.

This "Plumbers Unit" broke into the Soviet Embassy in Washington in an unsuccessful attempt to find out if Fedora's report to the FBI was correct and if the Embassy also had a copy of the Defense Department's Standard Integration Operation Plan, intelligence sources said.

While the FBI would not comment on Fedora or the discovery that he was a double agent, an agent involved in the bureau investigation said:

"He was relied upon as a way of correlating and cross-checking the accuracy of what defectors said. . . . The discovery that he worked for the Russians would make every case he was used on suspect, and he worked on dozens."

The Readers Digest article is an excerpt from a book about Nicholas Shadrin, a Soviet naval commander

Fedora gave the FBI the idea of converting Shadrin into a U.S. double agent against the Soviet Union. As part of this plot, Shadrin was lured to Vienna and disappeared there in December 1975.

That article is a preview of a book being published by the Reader's Digest Press called "Shadrin: The Spy Who Never Came Back." The author is Henry Hurt, a roving editor of the magazine.

The Digest article is especially critical of Soviet defector Yuri Nosenko, one of the CIA's most famous and controversial Soviet defectors who now is a \$40,000-a-year consultant at the agency.

When he defected to the U.S. in 1964, Nosenko claimed to have information that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination of President Kennedy. He claimed an expertise in this area because he had been Oswald's KGB case officer when Oswald was in Russia. The CIA, according to the Reader's Digest article, found Nosenko's story full of lies and contradictions. But Fedora corroborated Nosenko's stories.

When Nosenko performed badly in closed testimony before the House Assassinations Committee in 1978, Fedora's credibility came under question at the FBI, according to the article.